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Rediscovering Gandhi and Principled Nonviolence: An Imperative for the 21st Century

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Abstract

"Violence is the behaviour of someone incapable of imagining other solutions to the problem at hand" Bettelheim
"I oppose all violence because the good it does is always temporary but the harm it does is permanent" Gandhi.
"Nonviolence is a Weapon of the Strong" Gandhi
"Nonviolence is fine as long as it works" Malcolm X
"Nonviolence is a flop. The only bigger flop is violence" Joan Baez
"To kill one man is to be guilty of a capital crime, to kill ten men is to increase the guilt ten-fold, to kill a hundred men is to increase it a hundred-fold. This the rulers of the earth all recognise and yet when it comes to the greatest crime--waging war on another state--they praise it..." Mozi, China 470-391 BC

This paper argues that while strategic nonviolence is necessary for the overthrow of repressive regimes it is not sufficient for the social, economic and political transformations that follow. Many of the nonviolent revolutions that have succeeded recently in overthrowing dictators and autocrats have not been successful in initiating short, medium and long term peace dividends for the people nor a radical critique of traditional approaches to governance. This paper argues that these things will only happen if nonviolent leaders and followers have a principled approach to social change. It is this which will enable a strong service oriented social and political compass. Without a deep and principled dedication to care for the welfare of others any tactical political change will founder on the rocks of pragmatic and sectional politics.

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Analysing why individuals, groups, movements, organisations, and nations resort to (direct or indirect) violence to satisfy their interests and needs is a, if not the, major "*problematique*" of peace and conflict studies. Analysing individual, group, movement and national alternatives to violence has not, however, received anywhere near the same amount of academic attention. This is partly because violence is assumed to be more interesting and sexier than nonviolence; if it bleeds it leads, but it also reflects the fact that even in the richly normative discipline of peace and conflict studies we tend to be much more concerned with pathology than cure.

One of the reasons for the relative neglect of nonviolence is that there is no word which adequately explains what it is all about. Is it an ethical belief, an attitude, a tactic or a strategy, or all of the above? What has motivated people in the past to choose nonviolence and what motivates people in the present to choose nonviolence in response to life's many dilemmas? Why in the second decade of the 21st century has there been an upsurge of both academic and political interest in nonviolence?

There are many answers to all these questions.

In the first place it is clear that within most major religious and philosophical traditions nonviolence is viewed as a superior way of living - something to aspire to. These religious traditions developed what is known as "**Principled Nonviolence**". This was and is seen as more virtuous than the old warrior traditions. Christians, for example, are enjoined to love their enemies; Hindus and Buddhists to observe the oneness of all things and not harm life; Taoists and Confucians reinforce a search for harmony as a universal truth principle. All of these religious traditions highlight the value of principled nonviolence. Nonviolence is a way of both understanding and living "truth" in the face of the physical, psychological and moral vulnerability that flows from each one of us living in the company of others. Principled nonviolence is based on a rejection of all physical violence. It rests on a willingness to suffer instead of inflicting suffering; a concern to end violence and a celebration of the transformative power of love and compassion. Nonviolence is seen as an outward manifestation of a loving spirit within each one of us. (Recent neuroscience incidentally, underlines that what world religions view as love may in fact be hard wired into our right brain instincts for connection and bonding (see McGilchrist 2009:156).

Principled nonviolence seeks to love potential enemies rather than destroy them and promotes nonviolent peaceful means to peaceful ends. Its preferred processes are persuasion, cooperation and nonviolent resistance to forceful coercion for political purposes. Mahatma Gandhi, was probably the most exemplary representative of this tradition. His whole life was dedicated to the nonviolent pursuit of justice and peace and to doing no harm to others. He wanted to build communities and nations based on positive nonviolent principles.

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Gandhi distinguished between “Nonviolence for the Weak” which was the use of nonviolent techniques in resistance to oppression (what is now thought of as tactical or strategic nonviolence) and “Nonviolence for the Strong” which is a permanent nonviolent lifestyle for those with resources, power and influence. This “Nonviolence for the Strong” involved self-discipline, simple living, an inner search for truth and the courage to confront injustice and oppression by nonviolent means (Dalton 2012).

This principled nonviolent tradition has over the years given rise to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and fuelled many of the principled and pragmatic nonviolent political movements of the 21st century. It has been successful, for example, in places like Poland, the Philippines and many countries in the former Soviet Union. Nonviolence as a way of life provides a powerful moral compass for evaluating whether different kinds of social movements, or economic, social and political decisions are likely to generate sustainable development and stable peace over the medium to long term.

The second understanding of nonviolence is what is known as pragmatic, tactical or strategic nonviolence. Some critics refer to this perspective as “nonviolence light”. This is a little unfair since many of the people who engage in tactical and strategic nonviolence often exhibit considerable courage when confronting oppressive regimes and deep-rooted injustice. The reason it is considered nonviolence light, however, is because it does not demand a commitment to personal pacifism or a nonviolent lifestyle. Pragmatic nonviolence simply asserts that physical violence is too costly or impractical; it is grounded in political struggle and is seen as an effective tool or method for generating political change. Instead of asking what is right it asks what will work? Pragmatic nonviolence is a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It aims at short term goals, e.g, the overthrow of a repressive regime or changes to unjust and oppressive laws, rather than an end to all violence in all spheres of social life. Pragmatists see no particular problem in utilising nonviolent tactics or strategies to overthrow a regime and then utilising all the machinery of government (including its coercive security, police and military capacities) to maintain order for their own groups and interests. Principled nonviolent actors on the other hand always feel somewhat suspicious about the circulation of power elites and are wary of assuming responsibility for the monopoly of force and power at the heart of most state systems. Pragmatic nonviolence is not averse to the use of coercion-especially psychological and economic coercion. But it draws the line at physical coercion for regime change. Having achieved power, however, pragmatic nonviolent movements are willing to utilise physical coercion on behalf of the new regime. The principle concern of strategic, pragmatic nonviolence is to resist oppression, build mass-based movements, lower the entry and participation requirements and ensure that they are effective instruments for waging a range of political struggles. Gene Sharp, one of the principle advocates of strategic nonviolence argues that “Nonviolence is what people do, not what they believe.

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Nonviolence is an alternative weapons system" (Sharp 1973). Because of this philosophical position, strategic nonviolence focuses a lot of attention on articulating and promoting a wide range of nonviolent protest tactics; the withdrawal of cooperation or noncooperation (with private and public sector actors) and the tactics and strategy of civil disobedience to unjust customs, norms and laws.

The good news is that pragmatic strategic nonviolence has proven effective in civilian resistance to oppression (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011); the bad news is that many of these successful examples of pragmatic nonviolence have not proven so successful over the long haul. Many have come to power, e.g, The Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt, but have refused to grapple with many of the deeper sources of both direct and indirect violence and have wittingly and unwittingly perpetuated popular preoccupation with state power, politics and coercive agency. This is why I wish to argue in this paper that principled nonviolence is an imperative and not an optional extra. Principled nonviolence is capable of embracing strategic nonviolence while generating a critical wariness of the state. It encourages the development of grass roots capabilities, legitimacy and resilience and it is aimed at long term rather than short term solutions. It will work with the state when appropriate and oppose it when it is not. It derives its legitimacy and power from values that cannot be compromised, by continual self-critique as well as a critique of what is and by a willing commitment to change as long as that change is generating a more just and peaceful world. It is the misplaced focus on the state that is proving to be the Achilles heel of strategic nonviolence.

This raises an important question as to why all change agents (whether from a principled or pragmatic nonviolent tradition) focus so much attention on the state? One reason is that the state's monopoly of coercive capacity, force and violence defines and shapes the ground rules for both pragmatic and principled nonviolence. We can't avoid this. If we are to map the contours of violence, then it is imperative that we understand who is dominant, who subordinate? Who is in and who is out? Who has power and who is relatively or absolutely powerless? My argument, however, is that principled nonviolent action is committed to seeing beyond "normal politics" to discern alternative political and human possibilities. This orientation generates radical challenge to both the state and wider economic and social sources of direct, structural and cultural violence. There is nothing in pragmatic nonviolence that will necessarily or automatically move it in a more radical direction.

One of the reasons we are so preoccupied with the nation state is because state systems, in modern industrial economies, have an enormous capacity to determine social, economic and political outcomes for people and we know that they directly or indirectly have a critical role to play in terms of levels of wellbeing, cooperation, harmony and peace. The downside of

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this fascination, however, is that social movement activists and leaders, and even peace researchers, become seduced by the logic of state power and in different ways reinforce it by and with their/our particular academic and political preoccupations.

Recently, for example, there has been an upsurge of academic "Peace and International Relations" interest in the utility of nonviolent social movements for regime change and wider social and political transformation. *The Journal of Peace Research*, for example, dedicated its 2013 May issue to "Understanding Nonviolent Resistance" (Chenoweth & Cunningham 2013).

In this issue there are lots of articles outlining the diverse ways in which nonviolent social and political movements have been successful in relation to self-determination movements, regime change and general political struggles for human rights and other issues. This issue of JPR focuses attention on such things as resource mobilisation, decreasing barriers to participation, coalition formation, tactics, strategy, discipline, elite defections and the positive utility of "backfire" in resisting oppressive rule. Most of the papers "demonstrate the importance of treating nonviolent and violent strategies, as well as conventional politics strategies, as alternative choices for engaging the state" (Chenoweth & Cunningham 2013). Or as Chenoweth says "Improved theory and data on the subject will help researchers and policymakers to shape strategies to support these movements when appropriate, and to manage changes in the international system that result from the success of nonviolent uprisings" (Chenoweth & Cunningham 2013).

These comments continue the preoccupations of an earlier paper published in *International Security* on "Why Civil resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict" (Stephan & Chenoweth 2008) and more recently Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan's award winning book on *Why Civil Resistance Works*. (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011) I will return to some of their key issues later in the paper.

All of this recent work on the effectiveness of nonviolent tactics and strategy for political transformation are being proposed for pragmatic purposes and are seen by many critics as simply enlarging the number of nonviolent options available to protest movements all around the world. There is growing evidence that the upsurge of recent interest in these movements is so that they can be adopted or coopted by a range of political parties and movements because of their low entry costs and effectiveness in building mass movements rather than because of any ideological or ethical commitment to a radically nonviolent future.

In this sense strategic and pragmatic nonviolence is primarily a 21st century means of waging nonviolent political struggle in order to change repressive national and global political systems in a democratic and Western direction. These movements are, therefore, a very integral part of the wider liberal peace project. (Newman, Paris, & Richmond, 2009) There is no deeper

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commitment to linking nonviolent means to nonviolent ends or to advancing local level solutions to locally driven problems. Many of the movements and parties adopting strategic nonviolence are doing so to advance the liberal peace by non-coercive means. This suits the Western liberal peace agenda very well indeed. There are numerous examples of nonviolent means being used to overthrow a dictatorship or repressive rule without any future commitment to a more just or nonviolent future. As mentioned above, once repressive rulers have been overthrown, the leaders of strategic nonviolent movements see little or no contradiction between taking over all the old dictator's machinery of government and coercive capacities.

Strategic nonviolence does not extend to an ongoing deepening of nonviolent, pacific values or the emergence of state systems that are less dependent on force than those which have been replaced. Thus it seems to me that many of the sanguine predictions for the power of nonviolent civil resistance might need to be modified over the medium to long term.

Strategic nonviolent tactics have been promoted tirelessly by the International Centre of Nonviolent Conflict. This organisation has done a huge amount of work promoting pragmatic and strategic nonviolence. In doing so they have equipped a wide range of different groups and social and political movements with tactics and strategies for resisting political oppression and dictatorship. And they have been successful. Many recent nonviolent revolutions owe their success to the work and ideas of the ICNC. This organisation can claim credit for shifting dictators–which is an important pre-requisite for nonviolent transformation–but apart from ensuring that dictators don't return it is not primarily interested in transformational processes beyond opposition to repressive and oppressive rule. In fact the ICNC specifically rejects the value or importance of principled nonviolence as unnecessary or irrelevant to the strategic logic of nonviolence. This means that they are more interested in short to medium term strategic effectiveness rather than long term social and political transformation. The mission of the ICNC is to promote the strategic utility and effectiveness of nonviolent resistance as a political weapon. They assert that

> "Nonviolent conflict is a way for people to fight for rights, freedom, justice, self-determination, and accountable government, through the use of civil resistance - including tactics such as strikes, boycotts, protests, and civil disobedience" (ICNC Mission Statement 2009).

Note the stress on "fight" and how much of the focus of these fights is on civil resistance, directed primarily but not exclusively, at corrupt, repressive, unaccountable and unjust governments. The ICNC is interested primarily in expanding the repertoire of nonviolent options for civil resistance to unjust and oppressive rule. I am not opposed to these ICNC initiatives. In fact I encourage them. It is definitely better to promote tactical and strategic nonviolent opposition

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to dictatorship and repressive rule than disorganised nonviolent activism or worse violent opposition to such rulers.

To the extent that these tactics have been effective in the Middle East, (Celestino & Gleditsch 2013) and elsewhere (Dudouet 2013), the ICNC, and other individuals and groups promoting pragmatic rather than principled nonviolence can take credit for successfully focusing on nonviolence as a political strategy rather than a way of life. They see these successful social movements as vindication for a pragmatic, non-threatening nonviolence.

They are not interested in moral values, short or long term political vision or in ethical means–ends relationships. They are primarily interested in what works and what is politically effective. In their view most individuals and communities are happy to adopt nonviolent tactics but not so willing to adopt pacifism and nonviolence as personal guiding principles. Deeper values may be important, but as long as pragmatic nonviolence works, and as long as it is less personally or politically costly than violent options pragmatists advocate nonviolence for instrumental reasons.

The advocates of strategic nonviolence are very reluctant, therefore, to accept the demands of principled nonviolence or pacifism. They argue that there is no particular reason why nonviolent political activists have to have any "principled" justifications for their behaviour. In fact they argue that principled nonviolence (nonviolence as a way of life) is often an impediment to effectiveness. Principled actors, for example, might be too empathetic towards their opponents and not "tough" enough! Their justification for pragmatic nonviolence is largely utilitarian. It lies in the "success" of the movements. If millions of people over the past 50 years have taken to the streets in "successful" nonviolent protest movements this justifies pragmatic nonviolence. Most of the recent scholarship on these movements, therefore, have focused on tactics that have generated movement success in replacing regimes, securing independence and reducing oppression. Theorists and advocates of strategic nonviolence argue that if these goods can be achieved with pragmatic nonviolence why would theorists or activists seek to complicate things with more "idealistic" aspirations?

Well before the current spate of papers and books eulogising pragmatic nonviolence, L.K Bharadwaj argued the opposite case. He suggested a fundamental difference between pragmatic and principled nonviolence; an irreconcilable difference between (for example) Gandhian nonviolence and pragmatic nonviolence which he describes as a species of "moderate Machiavellianism" (Bharadwaj 1998). Machiavelli (the first systematic exponent of cynical realism) suggests that "immorality is the very law of politics". This is because success is all that is important to the ruler. He/she will justify any and all means in the pursuit of desirable political ends. This could mean, for example, torture, manipulation, subversion, war, propaganda, collective

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brainwashing, etc. Absolute Machiavellianism is willing to sacrifice everything on the altar of success. “Moderate Machiavellianism” on the other hand has slightly clearer normative boundaries but if the moderate way fails Machiavellian logic will generate a willingness to contemplate if not subvert nonviolent peaceable processes.

Max Weber made similar comments in his lecture “Politics as a Vocation”. In this he argued that

> “‘The decisive means for politics is violence’. Against the prominent German Pacifist and Great War opponent, E W Forster, he claimed ‘It is not true that good can follow only from good and evil only from evil, but that often the opposite is true. Anyone who fails to see this, is indeed, a political infant…anyone interested in saving their soul should not seek it along the avenue of politics, for the quite different task of politics can only be solved by violence’….[in response to the biblical injunction to turn the other cheek, Weber argues]’ for the politician, the reverse proposition holds, Thou shalt resist evil by force” (Howes 2013)

In opposition to these arguments, Bharadwaj argues

> “As long as nonviolence is embraced on pragmatic grounds; and, not truth and morality, but success and power….are made the criteria of its efficacy it prepares itself for self defeat” (Bharadwaj, 1998).

The reason for this is that the focus on political success is likely to lead to an opportunistic and half hearted acceptance of nonviolence. It will be embraced as long as it is successful but if it encounters deeper resistance or failure, as was the case in Syria, there will be a temptation to use other more expedient or violent means.

This willingness to compromise or explore alternatives to nonviolence will eventually lead to the destruction of good ends and means. (This argument has been vindicated in Egypt and Tunisia over the past year (Gresh 2013). Without deep commitment to principled nonviolence individuals, groups and movements in both countries have been prepared to consider cynical nonviolence (such as nonviolent demonstrations under the auspices of the military and security forces) or more violent options to secure economic, social or political advantage).

Gandhi (and his disciple Martin Luther King), on the other hand, both want to preserve the purity of means and ends at all costs and assert:

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> "the unity and integrality of means and ends, treating truth and nonviolence as convertible terms (two side of the one coin).... (Gandhi) would rather that one use violence, or even "kill rather than be a coward" than accept nonviolence merely on pragmatic grounds or for reasons of expediency" (Bharadwaj 1998).

The proponents of pragmatic nonviolence apply a minimal political principle of doing no physical harm to those they politically oppose. The advocates of principled nonviolence, on the other hand apply a principled rejection of the use of physical or emotional violence in all personal and political life. They do not see nonviolence as a short term rational choice for particular political ends, rather it is a way of life and being. The challenge is how to hold the principled and pragmatic in tension. Gandhi was definitely the leading advocate of principled nonviolence but he was also willing to resort to pragmatic tactical nonviolence for different types of political objectives. The difference between him and contemporary pragmatists, however, is that his pragmatic nonviolence always took place within a much more demanding principled framework. Gandhi was never happy with the short term political gains he and his followers achieved as he knew that generating a non-violent world demanded personal and collective commitment on a daily basis and for the long haul.

If we take two examples of principled nonviolent action - e.g, the Indian Struggle for Independence and the United States Civil Rights movement it is clear that analysts and activists were as concerned with the peaceful consequences of their processes as they were with the outcomes. They would feel uneasy with processes that did not accord as much respect to their opponents as their followers. Because of this they subjected their politics to much more radical and critical scrutiny than those who are opportunistically nonviolent. If our goal is to be in peaceful relations with fellow human beings at all levels and in all sectors through time then this is a much more demanding and radical proposition than simply applying nonviolence to achieve immediate political objectives.

In recognition of this, nonviolent actors such as War Resisters International have developed specific principles of nonviolent action. They know that many people will not be able to accept all of the principles all of the time but these principles (most of which are some variant of Gandhi's principles) do provide a reasonably clear normative framework for guiding nonviolent behaviour. Without such principles it is possible for pragmatic nonviolent movements to engage in a wide variety of opportunistic actions that might do emotional or even physical harm to opponents while changing their economic, social or political behaviour. It is also the case that without such principles, those who are pragmatically nonviolent will have little incentive to work for inclusive, longer term stable peace (with justice) after political objectives have been secured. The WRI principles are as follows:

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- "We acknowledge the value of each person. This is fundamental; recognising the dignity and humanity of oneself and others. We refuse to mistreat our opponent as an enemy.
- We recognise that we all have part of the truth; no-one has all of it. No one is all 'right' or 'wrong'. Our campaign information gathering, educations and actions should reflect this.
- Our actions emphasise openness to promote communication and democratic processes. We work for processes that express 'power with' not 'power over' others. Empowering all involved in a campaign is important. We promote democratic structures (internally and externally) to maximise self determination.
- Our means (behaviours and actions) are consistent with our ends (of affirming life, opposing oppression and seeking justice, valuing every person). Our strategy must be based on this principle, we cannot justify a 'victory' obtained through violent or deceitful methods.
- We are willing to undergo suffering rather than inflict it. Refusing to inflict suffering is based on the value of each person and is a strategy that draws attention to our commitment and our cause. We will not violently fight back if attacked. We recognise jail may be a consequence of our actions; filling the jails may be a strategy.
- We commit ourselves for nonviolent action according to the guidelines agreed. If necessary we will attempt to arrange orientation sessions or workshops in nonviolence to better understand and practice this commitment" (Clark 2009).

These values are very different from the pragmatic guidelines for strategic nonviolent activists. Gene Sharp, for example, documents 198 different kinds of nonviolent action classified into three categories according to their strategic function. (i) nonviolent protest or persuasion, (ii) non co-operation and (iii) nonviolent interventions aimed at disrupting old social relationships and or forging new autonomous relations. (Sharp, 1973) None of these tactics rest on any philosophical or principled positions although a lot of Sharp's original work was a detailed analysis of Gandhian philosophy and practice (Sharp 1970) They just represent actions that have proven effective in past conflicts.

They are promoted as wothwhile tactics because they are considered or "proven" to be effective. Kurt Schock (2005), who is a very sophisticated advocate for pragmatic nonviolence, for example, focuses on tactics that will generate (a) political leverage; (b) resilience in the face of repression or (c) advice on when to concentrate or disperse movement forces in different campaigns. These different dimensions or tactics of successful movements could just as easily be interim tactics for the military as they are for nonviolent resistance movements.

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Military strategists, for example, will try and exhaust nonviolent options before contemplating violent ones because they know the costs of violence are higher than the costs of non-violence.

Chenoweth and Stephan argue very specifically that what makes pragmatic nonviolence so effective are the low entry costs for participants. Because actors do not need to embrace moral or political principles and do not need to worry about the dangers and costs of armed violence they can be more easily mobilised en masse (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011).

This orientation has been vigorously promoted by the ICNC. The consequences have been varied. On the one hand there is no doubt that Gene Sharp's strategies and tactics have been widely circulated all around the world. There is also no doubt that these tactics have been put to use in a range of oppressive environments with considerable success. But there are downsides as well. The ICNC has been criticised in the past for its close links with Freedom House (Peter Ackerman is Chair of the Board of that organisation). They have also been criticised for being too close to US Government policy in relation to some externally sponsored internal subversion of odious regimes. It suits the US government well to have strategic nonviolent advocates focus their attention on states considered problematic to US global interests. If these regimes can be overthrown by nonviolent popular movements that removes the need for state to state subversion! It certainly postpones the need for 'dirty tricks" campaigns or more high risk military interventions. So strategic nonviolence suits big states like the US well. If strategic nonviolence, for example, can generate elite defections from odious regimes this avoids the necessity for the US to engage in covert or overt military engagement and helps the toppling of "dictatorships" in a "friendly" non-coercive fashion! In this way the United States can generate more and more democratic like-minded states all around the world without damage to its reputation or any need to engage in diplomatic threat.

In terms of outcomes, however, I would argue that in these instances, there is very little to distinguish the tactics or choices of strategic nonviolent actors from actors with violent means at their disposal.

In relation to military or political defections, for example, both violent and nonviolent strategists will try and generate incentive packages to generate elite discontent, dissent and defection. If the strategic nonviolent inducements don't work, the sanctions are more mass mobilisations aimed at paralysing the government. If the strategic violent actor's inducements do not work the sanction is likely to be more coercive violent threat. Both violent and nonviolent strategists therefore aim at exerting power for particular political interests. Both are a long way from the goals and aspirations of principled nonviolent actors.

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Most of the pragmatic nonviolent literature is about a re-conceptualisation of power such that citizens might realise and utilise their latent capacities more effectively. This contrasts rather dramatically with the principled nonviolent activists who are interested in radically recasting power as a tool of deeper social empowerment - “power with others” rather than “power over others”. Pragmatic nonviolence is about challenging those in power by withdrawing cooperation and compliance. It is about political competition by nonviolent means. Pragmatic nonviolence is not normally aimed at a fundamental rethinking of state institutions or the nature of the relationships between civil society and the state. Rather it is directed at enabling those who are relatively or absolutely powerless to realise their latent power so that they might (directly or indirectly) make state and political institutions work in their favour. Where the state institutions are considered fragile or defective, pragmatic nonviolence is aimed at making them work more effectively and legitimately. This is not an anarchist/non-state option; it is simply a collection of methods for exerting power and influence on the part of the relatively powerless or disenfranchised by nonviolent means. It is a nonviolent political choice. The problem is that in most democratic environments this is not all that radical.

Most politics in democratic systems are nonviolent and most social and political movements that wish to be politically effective within state systems have to play by the Weberian logic of the state rather than a deeper radical logic of personal, interpersonal, social and communitarian nonviolence.

Principled nonviolence on the other hand has a much more radical ontology. It seeks to challenge and change the militarised, dominatory and sovereign nature of contemporary politics so that political institutions are de-centered, decentralised, responsive and truly representative of diverse social and political opinion. Principled nonviolence is always ambivalent about the state because of the iron fist that lies beneath the velvet glove of all political and judicial institutions. They are not happy with re-arranging the deck chairs of the titanic-substituting one regime for another. They want safer ships!!

Principled Nonviolence advocates want minimal state systems with absolutely minimal security establishments. They want deeper notions of popular legitimacy rather than claims based on a monopoly of force[1]. John Burton (1969), for example, argues that the whole point of collaborative problem solving is to challenge adversarialism wherever it occurs-within society, education, the polity, the judiciary and the economy. It would be very challenging for a Burtonian, therefore, to advocate pragmatic nonviolence because this is aimed primarily at the enhancement of adversarial tactics for very specific political purposes.

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Principled nonviolence is aimed at something else altogether. It is aimed at building radical cultures of respect, dignity and peacefulness at social, economic and political levels. It is not seduced just by the political. It is based on giving practical recognition to what I would call the politics of love and compassion. Most principled nonviolence flows from Gandhian philosophy and is based on a daily practice to wage peace. Gandhi was always looking for the "truth" in relationships and believed that if he could discover what generated deeper empathetic compassion this "truth force" would prove more compelling than brute force. He believed in living each day with truth, justice, patience, compassion, courage and loving kindness as his companions. These are the values and concerns that I and most peace advocates promote. This is a much more radical commitment than simply looking for effective political tactics. Gandhi's use of the ancient Hindu term Ahimsa (which means not injuring or harming anyone being nonviolent in thought word and deed) actively promotes universal well-being for all species. This means a radical respect for the environment and all species, what Gandhi calls Sarvodaya or justice for all creatures (for an elaboration of these concepts, see Prakash 2013). It also involves a commitment to what Gandhi called Swaraj or self-rule where we assume full responsibility for our own behaviour and for decisions on how to organise our own communities. It stands in radical tension with what we might think of as dominatory politics. It is also based on Swadeshi, or the Genius of the Local, where as far as possible needs are satisfied from a locality, drawing on the genius of local knowledge and skills. Finally, it is based on Satyagraha or nonviolent revolution which is aimed at turning foes into friends and intolerance into hospitality. This is very different from mass-based social and political movements which assume that regime change will solve the problems of human coexistence. It is aimed at continual nonviolence, unleashing virtuous cycles from multiple acts of small goodness. They produce radical transformation by consistent altruism, goodness, and compassionate behaviour. In actively resisting oppression Satyagrahis understand that "there are wrongs to die for, yet not a single one to kill for" (Prakash 2013).

All of these principles for a just and peaceful life are a long way from the short term considerations of the pragmatic activist. They are a clear articulation of a living revolution, a daily revolution, a revolution that, by definition knows no end. They are principles that give a radical edge to personal and political transformation and the good news is that they have been embodied by many of the leaders and movements that advocate principled nonviolence (many of which join forces with strategic nonviolent movements for specific purposes-all of which would have some ambivalence about the current state centric biases within the strategic nonviolent movement).

Most of the handbooks and manuals for principled nonviolent training, (e.g., the WRI manual above) they are all pitched at ensuring that nonviolent movement processes are different from those of their opponents. If the state practices top-down exclusive decision making,

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for example, the movement wants bottom up participatory and consensual decision making. If the state doesn't know how to enlarge consensual decision making processes then the movement wants to focus on how to do it. The WRI manual, for example, spends a lot of time defining what is meant by consensus decision making and how to develop what they call “spokecouncils” (Clark 2009). This is aimed at generating a different way of making decisions in collaboration with rather than in opposition to those whose values and interests are affected by the decisions. Similarly, these movements seek to embody gender, ethnic and cultural diversity in different ways. Most if not all of them, however, have some common aspirations for a replacement of “brute force” with something more civilised.

Conclusions

The advocates of pragmatic nonviolence like to assert that their position is a viable position between militarism and pacifism. It is realistic, entry costs are low and it has proven highly efficacious (Zunes, Kurtz & Asher 1999). They suggest that pragmatic nonviolence is the moral equivalent of war. I would like to take issue with this assertion and suggest that unless there is a willingness to embrace principled, pacifist, nonviolence these social movements are likely to get snared by the political logic of the modern industrial state and are likely to find themselves as messily compromised as those who advocate more coercive positions.

Social movement scholars argue that there are three major elements in relation to their success or failure. These are political opportunities, mobilising structures and framing processes. (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Sharp, 1980). My argument is that it is in the popular and elite framing of the movements that we will discover whether or not they have transformative potential or are simply conducting politics by other means. The short medium and long term successes of strategic nonviolence will be determined not by the efficaciousness of tactics but by whether or not the leadership of these movements and their followers embrace principled nonviolence. Without a significant leavening of the pragmatic and strategic lump – these movements are simply engaged in political competition by nonviolent means.

With more principled commitments they become constant irritants to the taken for granted of global economics and politics. Without this radical critical edge they will generate the illusion of change but the dynamics will be just as unpeaceful, just as unjust as the politics they seek to replace. What has happened to the 1979 Iranian Revolution? (listed as a successful nonviolent campaign by Chenowath and Stephan) (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011) or the first Palestinian Intifada or People Power in the Philippines? (Chenoweth & Stephan 2011). Because they were not imbedded in principled nonviolent movements their long term impacts have been mixed both in terms of justice and peacefulness. The reality is that while all of these movements generated

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positive outcomes in the short term they have not been able to transform these into long term positives because the leadership did not have the mental, moral or value-based discipline to keep on ensuring peace by peaceful means and justice by peaceful means.

The world has become a more peaceful place-not just because effective and legitimate state systems and the rule of law have been expanded (Pinker 2011) but because there has been a growing normative recognition of the unacceptability of violence as a political or social means of control . This message and this norm has been upheld through the centuries by religious and non-religious actors who have been willing to articulate a principled and ethical position affirming life and the unacceptability of direct or indirect violence. It is a normative position that needs to be constantly reiterated but it's the right one if we are to be the social and political change that we want to realise. Very little attention has been directed to the attitudinal or behavioural consequences of these values in the assessment of strategic nonviolence and yet it has been carefully nurtured and promoted by principled nonviolent advocates for centuries. Does it matter whether actors are principled or pragmatic re nonviolence as long as the strategy and tactics work? I want to argue that it does matter. In fact it matters a lot - especially in areas where violence is considered an acceptable political tool. It matters particularly around issues of mobilisation, persistence, leverage and outcomes. This is because there is a big difference between short term and long term change/ transformation and outcomes.

Principled nonviolence is more likely to generate movement discipline, strategic flexibility and critical understanding of connections between direct oppression/structural violence and cultural violence. If there is no care, compassion, empathetic consciousness in strategic nonviolence there is always the danger that it might result in a different kind of oppression but nevertheless oppression in consequence.

Principled nonviolence is an imperative, not an optional extra! It is the ethical glue that binds strategic and tactical nonviolence to its ethical heart. It is the spur that is needed to promote collaborative open and participatory institutions and it is crucial to ensuring that all social systems really engage in that much more long term and herculean task of building cultures and structures of sustainable peace.

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Endnote

(1) There is a curious allegiance, here, between left and right wing agendas although there are some big differences as well. Both see the dangers of state domination of the economic and society. The left, however, wants to reduce or eliminate the security sphere as much as possible while the right wants to reduce the welfare and educational sphere as much as possible. Both are interested, however, in enhancing the power of non-state actors

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